DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

Building strong, healthy communities together

ANNUAL ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT

FISCAL YEARS 2011-2012

NOVA SCOTIA
Community Services

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1.0 Accountability Statement

The accountability report of the Department of Community Services for the year ended March 31, 2012 is prepared pursuant to the *Finance Act* and government policies and guidelines. These authorities require the reporting of outcomes against the *Department of Community Services' Statement of Mandate for the fiscal year 2011-2012*. The reporting of the Department of Community Services outcomes necessarily includes estimates, judgments and opinions by Community Services' management.

We acknowledge that this accountability report is the responsibility of Community Services' management. The report is, to the extent possible, a complete and accurate representation of outcomes relative to the goals and priorities set out in the *Department of Community Services' 2011-2012 Statement of Mandate*.

Denise Peterson-Rafuse
Minister, Department of Community Services

Robert Wood
Deputy Minister, Department of Community Services

2.0 Message from the Minister

On behalf of the Department of Community Services, I am pleased to provide you with our latest accountability report. In this report, you will find the department's accomplishments relative to the *Department of Community Services' 2011-2012 Statement of Mandate.*

Over the past year, the department has been busy delivering a wide range of social programs and services to Nova Scotians in need, and contributing to better futures for the province's youth, families and their children, persons with disabilities, and communities throughout Nova Scotia.

In 2011-2012, the province continued to help put more money into the pockets of Nova Scotians in need. For example, we increased the Nova Scotia Child Benefit by over 20 percent, the first inflation adjustment in almost a decade. Under the Employment Support and Income Assistance Program, the personal allowance rate was increased by $15 per month, the most significant increase in decades.

For persons with disabilities, we expanded the Independent Living and Alternative Family Support programs to enable more people with disabilities to live as independently as possible. Going forward, a long-term strategy is being developed for the province's continuing care and services for persons with disabilities programs.

We also made a significant investment in early childhood development resulting in almost a thousand more licensed child care spaces, along with 250 new child care subsidies. At year end, there were 48 subsidies still available to families.

These kinds of investments demonstrate our commitment to making life better for Nova Scotians while being responsible managers of the public purse.

The following report will share greater detail about these highlighted initiatives, along with information on many other significant accomplishments. I hope that you will find the report helpful in understanding the progress made by Community Services over the past year.

Regards,

Denise Peterson-Rafuse
Minister, Department of Community Services

3.0 Introduction

The annual Accountability Report for the Department of Community Services reports on the progress achieved by the department towards the outcomes and financial targets established in the *2011-2012 Statement of Mandate*. The *2011-2012 Statement of Mandate* is available on Community Services' website at http://www.gov.ns.ca/coms/department/Publications.html.

This report is organized into three sections. The first section highlights some of the department's 2011-2012 accomplishments. The next section details the department's progress against the outcomes and targets identified in the *2011-2012 Statement of Mandate*. The last section provides a summary of the financial results for the fiscal year.

4.0 Accomplishments

On a day-to-day basis the Department of Community Services delivers a wide range of social programs and services to Nova Scotians in need. These programs and services contribute to better futures for the province's youth, families and their children, persons with disabilities, and communities throughout Nova Scotia.

Described below are the department's accomplishments against the priorities identified in the *2011-2012 Statement of Mandate*.

Income Supports

In 2011-2012, to help make life more affordable for Nova Scotia families, an additional $18 million was invested in programs for low-income families, including:

- an increase in the Income Assistance Personal Allowance rate by $15 per month from $214 to $229
- an increase in the Nova Scotia Child Benefit of 22 percent per month per child
- an increase in Foster Care rates by 11 percent, the second consecutive increase
- an additional 250 child care subsidies to help more families access affordable child care
- amendments to the Income Assistance Wage Exemption policy to provide for a flat rate exemption of $150 per month
- an increase to the flat rate exemption for disabled income assistance recipients working in supported employment from $150 to $300 per month, while continuing to exempt 30 percent of the remaining net wages.

In addition, government indexed both the Affordable Living Tax Credit and the Poverty Reduction Credit to keep up with inflation.

Service Delivery Transformation

In 2011-2012, the department drafted a new delivery model for the Employment Support and Income Assistance (ESIA) Program. The model focuses on aiding the greatest number of clients to achieve financial independence, reducing busy work, and taking a risk-based approach to decision-making. Foundations of the model include:

- our programs and services serve as a bridge to a better life
- people, including those with disabilities, have a chance to take advantage of job opportunities and that they are not penalized for trying
- the application processes is as simple as possible; so more time is being spent on what really counts – finding the right help for people.

Implementation of the new model will begin in 2012-2013 with activity in three major areas: establishing effective service partner models, rolling out initial process changes to reduce workload, and a focus on achieving client independence.

Alignment of Labour Market Programs

The alignment of Labour Market Program Project as outlined in the *2011-2012 Statement of Mandate*, changed in December 2011, to reflect the new strategic direction of department; from integration of employability based programs, to a partnership approach that will better support clients finding and maintaining employment.

Housing

Through the Economic Stimulus Program, the department completed one of the largest investments in capital repairs and new construction in decades. Over two years, the department invested $128 million to create approximately 200 new affordable homes for hundreds of Nova Scotians and to renovate and repair thousands of units.

- $48.1 million has been committed for accessibility enhancements, energy retrofit and repair and renovation to the Province's public housing stock
- $20.6 million has been committed for repairs for 1,100 units in cooperatives and non-profits
- $ 27.4 million committed in new construction activity representing almost 200 units
- $13.3 million was committed for the creation and preservation of 409 units
- $18 million of the Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program (RRAP) funding committed to assisting over 1,500 households.

Defining the Strategic Direction of Services for Persons with Disabilities

In the Fall 2011, Government established a dedicated, cross-departmental team to work on a long-term strategy to address Nova Scotia's Continuing Care (CC) and Services for Persons with Disabilities (SPD) sectors. The demand for, and costs of providing these programs are increasing. Yet there are gaps in the continuum which are predicted to widen as the population ages. In 2011-2012, the project team engaged several experts in the field and completed the background research necessary to begin the development of solutions for Continuing Care and Services for Persons with Disabilities. The work is being guided by four key principles:

- adopt a person-focused approach
- expand/enhance home/community based services
- increase integration/coordination
- implement cost-effective initiatives.

Improved Access to Disability Supports

With an additional investment of $1.5 million, in 2011-2012, Community Services improved access to supports for persons with disabilities, by:

- expanding the Independent Living and Alternative Family Support programs to enable people with disabilities to live as independently as possible
- expanding access to day programs to disabled individuals exiting the public school system
- implementing new income guidelines for the Direct Family Support for Children's program so more families in need are able to access the program
- creating regional, interdisciplinary outreach teams to work with families and service providers, enabling them to better support family members with challenging behavioural needs
- developing a new support program for families caring for a family member in their home who has very high and complicated care needs.

Child Welfare Redesign

Construction of the new 18-bed residential treatment facility at Wood Street campus in Truro neared completion. This program was designed to complement the Wood Street Secure Treatment Program, which provides short term crisis stabilization in a locked facility, under Court supervision. The new program will enable the department to continue treatment for children and youth in the Minister's Care, who require a highly structured community based-program, with multidisciplinary support, to address severe emotional and behavioral problems arising from experiences of child abuse and neglect.

The new Wood Street Centre is another important step towards achieving the vision for child welfare - a single integrated service system, accessible and responsive to children and families across the province.

Early Childhood Development

Community Services is committed to developing a licensed child care system that is accessible, affordable and sustainable.

In 2011-2012, the department invested nearly $50 million to improve accessibility and quality of child care. This included:

- operational funding for an additional 973 licensed child care spaces, bringing the total number of spaces to 16,377
- 250 new child care subsidies, bringing the total available to 4,427
- funding to over 200 licensed child care facilities to support young children with special needs
- a $17 million investment to help child care facilities recruit and retain staff.

In addition, amendments to the *Day Care Regulations*, came into effect April 1, 2011. These amendments reflect current best practices, increase educational/training requirements for child care staff, and increase the role of parents' participation in regulated child care.

Domestic Violence Action Plan

The Domestic Violence Action Plan, announced in December of 2010, outlined the actions government planned to take to address domestic violence.

In 2011-2012, as a key partner in delivery of the Domestic Violence Action Plan, Community Services has:

- developed a workplace pilot program that promotes awareness of family violence. The pilot is scheduled to be launched in 2012-2013
- provided funding to support the ongoing operation and promotion of the provincial helpline - a 24-hour, 7 days a week, province-wide telephone support service
- conducted best practice research on case conferencing models for high-risk cases involving children
- hosted Family Violence Tables in several communities with joint case conferencing a standing agenda item
- conducted workshops and provided training to community based programs that support and mentor at-risk male youth and children
- begun work on an accountability framework that will define the core services, standards and reporting requirements for men's intervention program

- revised the child abuse protocol and handbook to help child care staff more clearly understand their responsibilities in responding to a suspicion, or allegation of child abuse
- reviewed departmental policies and procedures regarding supervised access to children in care of the Minister
- partnered with energy conservation experts to identify areas to improve energy efficiency in shelters and transition houses
- established a research and evaluation partnership drawing on a wide range of expertise and providing an opportunity to leverage resources.

Accountability Framework for Funded Community-Based Programs

In collaboration with community-based organizations, the department completed the development of an accountability framework that includes service agreements, standards and reporting procedures. This framework provides clarity around funding for core services; outcomes and results; and helps facilitate the development of a comprehensive continuum of services for children, youth and families.

Strategic Plan

During the winter of 2011, the department embarked on the development of a five year strategic plan. The planning exercise brought forward:

- key outcomes
- principles to guide departmental efforts in the coming years
- high level strategies for core program areas

Over three months, 14 sessions, led by the Deputy Minister, were completed, with more than 1,200 Community Services staff attending. These sessions provided an opportunity for staff to provide input, to begin to develop a shared organizational philosophy, and to begin the process of supporting/renewing people's sense of purpose and connection to the organization.

5.0 Performance Measures

This section provides detailed information on the Department of Community Services' progress against the outcomes and targets identified in the *2011-2012 Statement of Mandate*.

As described below, several interrelated performance measures are used to help track progress towards achieving the following results:

- Nova Scotians are better able to support themselves and their families
- better access to adequate and affordable housing
- children, youth and families have a safe, secure and stable environment in which to grow and prosper
- persons with disabilities have access to the most appropriate supports to enhance their quality of life

5.1 Nova Scotians are Better Able to Support Themselves and Their Families

1. Measure: Number and Percent of Nova Scotians Living in Poverty

This measure represents the number and percentage of Nova Scotians whose total household income falls below a defined low-income threshold. The department uses *Statistics Canada* after-tax low-income cut-off (After-Tax LICO) to track poverty in Nova Scotia.

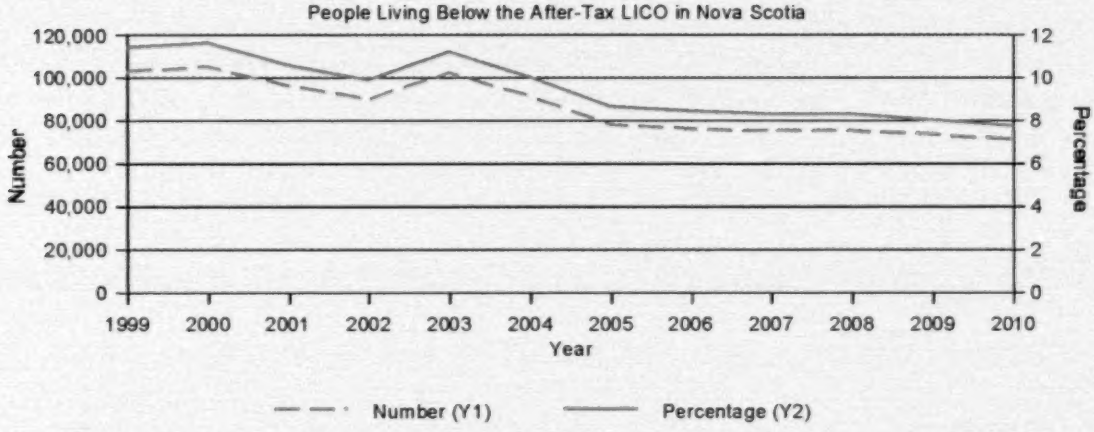
Low-Income Cut-Off Rates, 2010 (After-Tax LICO)					
Community Size / Family Size	Rural Area	Urban under 30,000	Urban 30,000-99,999	Urban 100,000-499,999	Urban
1 person	$12,271	$14,044	$15,666	$15,865	$18,759
2 persons	$14,936	$17,094	$19,069	$19,308	$22,831
3 persons	$18,598	$21,283	$23,744	$24,043	$28,430
4 persons	$23,202	$26,554	$29,623	$29,996	$35,469
5 persons	$26,421	$30,237	$33,732	$34,157	$40,388
Source: Statistics Canada, *Income in Canada 2010*, Cat. No. 75-202-X, Table No. 202-0801.					

What does this measure tell us?

A reduction in the number and percentage of people with incomes below the after-tax LICO is an indication that more people have income to spend on necessities such as food, shelter, and clothing, and that fewer need to depend on government transfer programs like income assistance.

Where are we now?

The latest Statistics Canada information indicates in 2010, the number of persons living in low-income in Nova Scotia declined from 73,000 in 2009 to 71,000 in 2010[1]. The prevalence of persons living in low-income also declined, from 8.0 percent to 7.7 percent.



In 2011-2012, to help make life more affordable for families, the department has:

- increased the Income Assistance Personal Allowance by $15 per month
- amended the Income Assistance Wage Exemption policy to provide for a flat rate exemption of $150 per month
- doubled the flat rate exemption for those working in supported employment from $150 to $300 per month
- introduced 250 new subsidies, assisting more families with their child care expenses to enable them to work, pursue employment, attend school

In addition, government has indexed the Poverty Reduction Credit and Affordable Living Tax Credit to keep pace with inflation.

Where do we want to be in the future?

In 2012-2013, Community Services aims to increase the number of Nova Scotians living independently of income assistance by ensuring our programs and services serve as a bridge to a better life.

[1] Statistics Canada, "Income in Canada 2010", Catalogue No. 75-202, Table 202-0802.

2. Measure: Number and Percentage of Children Living in Poverty

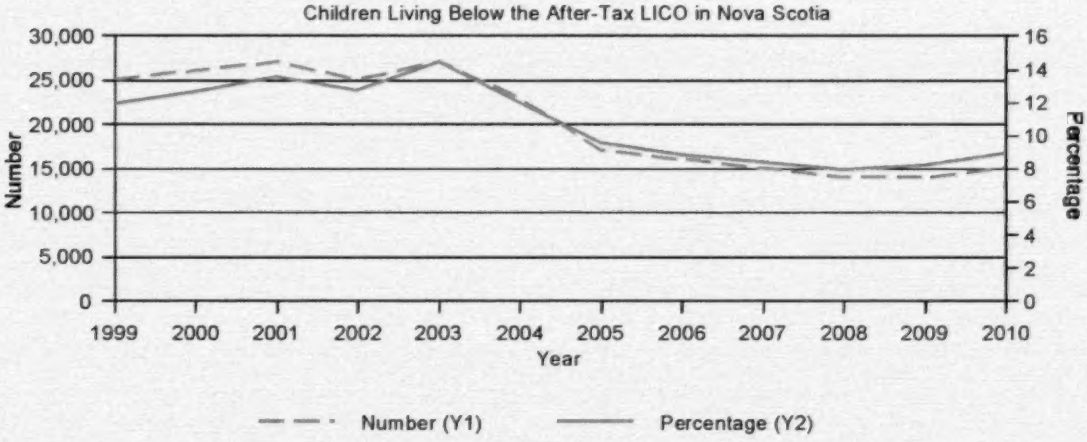
This measure represents the number and percentage of Nova Scotia children who live in households where the total household income falls below a defined low-income threshold. The department uses the after-tax low-income cut-off (After-Tax LICO) to track child poverty in Nova Scotia.

What does this measure tell us?

A reduction in the number or percentage of children who live in households with incomes below the after-tax LICO is an indication that fewer children have to live without necessities such as nutritious food, proper shelter, and clothing.

Where are we now?

The latest Statistics Canada information indicates in 2010, the number of children living in low-income rose from 14,000 to 15,000, and the prevalence was also up, from 8.1 percent to 8.9 percent in comparison to the previous year[2].



In 2011-2012, to help reduce the number and percentage of children living in poverty, government has:

- increased the Nova Scotia Child Benefit by 22 percent per month per child
- increased Foster Care rates by 11 percent, the second consecutive increase.

[2] Statistics Canada, "Income in Canada 2010", Catalogue No. 75-202, Table 202-0802.

Where do we want to be in the future?

In 2012-2013, Community Services aims to improve the educational, justice, health, social and economic determinants of children in care and child of income assistance recipients.

3. Measure: Average Monthly Beneficiaries as a Percentage of the Population

The average number of people on the department's income assistance caseload each fiscal year as a percentage of Nova Scotia's population represents the percentage of low income households dependent, in whole or in part, on income assistance to meet their basic needs.

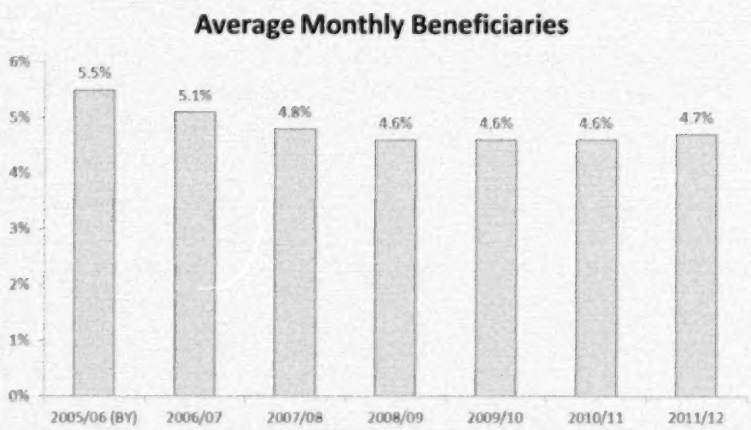
What does this measure tell us?

A reduction in the number of persons dependent on income assistance is an indication of better outcomes for low income people. It represents the number of persons who have moved to the work force or are making the transition into the work force.

Where are we now?

In 2011-2012, 4.7 percent of Nova Scotia's population was dependent, in whole or in part, on income assistance to meet their basic needs. This result is slightly higher than the target of 4.6 percent.

Economic growth had been slowly recovering since 2009 when the GDP declined by 0.3 percent. That downturn in the economy contributed to job losses and minimal employment growth. There is an inverse relationship between economic growth and demand for ESIA; slowing of the provincial economy, translates to higher caseload, usually within eighteen months.



Where do we want to be in the future?

In 2012-2013, the department would like to see a decline in the average monthly beneficiaries as a percentage of the population from increased labour market participation by recipients. Specific actions will include ensuring:

- our programs and services serve as a bridge to a better life
- people, including those with disabilities, have a chance to take advantage of job opportunities and that they are not penalized for trying
- application processes are as simple as possible; so more time is being spent on what really counts – finding the right help for people.

4. Measure: Percentage of Income Assistance Recipients with Wage Income

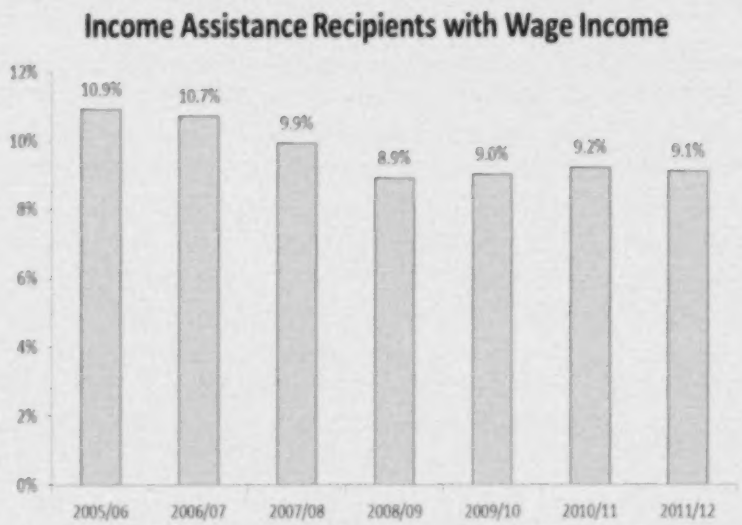
Employment Support Services helps eligible people on income assistance to become more self-sufficient. Involvement in employment activities such as volunteer or part-time work or career planning not only reduces reliance on income assistance but also enables individuals and families to achieve a greater degree of self-reliance and independence.

What does this measure tell us?

This measure indicates the percentage of income assistance recipients with wage income. Included in this calculation are individuals who are still receiving income assistance at a reduced amount because their earned wages are not sufficient to completely exit the program.

Where are we now?

In 2011-2012, 9.1 percent of income assistance recipients had wage income. This is below the department's target of 9.5 percent.



On a day to day basis, the department offers a variety of programs, such as Return to Work Projects, Targeted Wage Subsidy programs and Work Activity projects, with the goal of linking income assistance recipients to employment opportunities. In addition to these programs, in 2011-2012, the department amended its policies to support attachment to the labour market by:

- providing a flat rate wage exemption of $150 per month in addition to the 30 percent of the remaining net wages, and
- increasing the flat rate exemption for disabled income assistance recipients working in supported employment from $150 to $300 per month, while continuing to exempt 30 percent of the remaining net wages.

Where do we want to be in the future?

In 2012-2013, the department aims to help 1,500 more income assistance recipients find employment income, up from the 2,700 in 2011-2012. To achieve this target, the department plans to orient its ESIA policies, processes, job functions, technology and service delivery approaches to enhance client access, service satisfaction, and maximize client independence and self-reliance. Specifically, the department will:

- focus efforts on recipients who have strong potential for employment success, helping to connect them labour market, and providing pre and post-employment supports where needed
- pilot an innovative employment service model in select communities
- pilot an assessment model for clients who can benefit from an understanding of how health related issues can impact their ability to participate in employment, and/or employability activities.

5. Measure: Youth Assisted to Enhance Employability

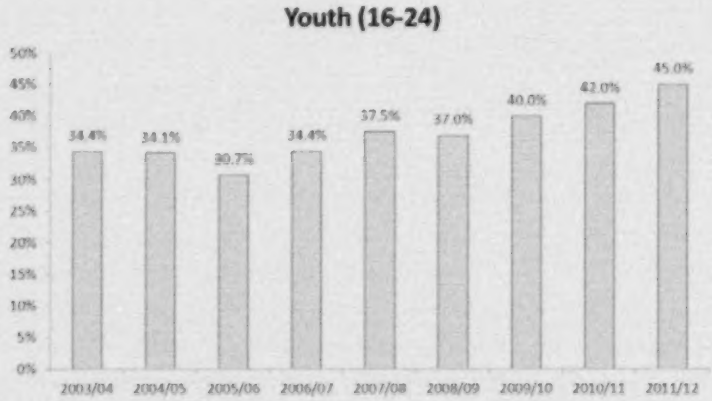
People who establish dependency patterns early in life often have greater difficulty establishing long-term self-sufficiency. The department is striving to ensure that youth in financial need have opportunities to transition to employment and self-reliance.

What does this measure tell us?

Participation in Employment Support Services helps individuals retain and build on the education and skills required to become and remain self-reliant. This measure indicates the percentage of income assistance recipients ages 16 to 24, participating in employment support services.

Where are we now?

In 2011-2012, there were approximately 6,165 income assistance recipients between the ages of 16 to 24. Of these, 45 percent (2,761 youth) participated in skills development, education, and employment support services. This exceeds the 2011-2012 target of 43 percent and marks the highest participation rate in comparison to the previous eight years.



Where do we want to be in the future?

A simplified assessment tool will be fully implemented in 2012-2013, providing an opportunity for more income assistance recipients, age 16 to 24, to participate in Employment Support Services. This means that more young people will be successful in finding and keeping a job.

5.2 Better Access to Adequate and Affordable Housing

1. Measure: Core Housing Need

Core housing need represents households that fall below adequacy, suitability or affordability standards.

What does the measure tell us?

Recognizing that adequate and affordable housing is essential for the well-being of Nova Scotians, the department provides a suite of housing programs to address the various needs of low and moderate income Nova Scotians and their families.

This measure indicates the number and percentage of households unable to access acceptable housing.

Where are we now?

The most recent Statistics Canada data below indicates that in 2006, 43,800 households, representing 12.1 percent of all Nova Scotia households fell below adequacy, suitability or affordability standards.

Atlantic Comparisons - Proportion of Households in Core Housing Need, 2006			
	Total	**Renters**	**Owners**
New Brunswick	10.3%	25.4%	5.7%
Nova Scotia	**12.1%**	**29.1%**	**5.9%**
PE	12.6%	28.4%	7.2%
Newfoundland	14.2%	34.5%	9.0%
Canada	12.7%	27.2%	6.3%

Through the Economic Stimulus Program, the department completed one of the largest investments in capital repairs and new construction in decades. Over two years, the

department had invested in over 2,350 units. These investments have not only improved the province's existing affordable rental housing but increased the supply of both publicly and privately owned affordable rental housing.

Where do we want to be in the future?

In 2011-2012, the Province entered into the *Canada-Nova Scotia Agreement for Investment in Affordable Housing 2011-2014*. Under this Agreement the Province has $61.2 million to invest in affordable housing and improve the lives of Nova Scotians in need by improving access to affordable, sound, suitable and sustainable housing.

In 2012-2013, the department will:

- continue to invest funds available under the *Agreement for Investment in Affordable Housing 2011-2014* (approximately $20M per year)
- develop an outcome focused housing strategy to guide housing policy and housing activity over the next 5 to 10 years.

2. Measure: Co-operative Housing Ranking

Co-operative housing plays an important role in connecting low income Nova Scotians with safe, affordable housing. Approximately 1,800 self-contained rental dwelling units are provided through 75 co-operative housing organizations across the province.

Based on physical condition of units, financial operations, and board governance, the department is able to determine the number of co-operative organizations "in difficulty".

What does the measure tell us?

Healthy co-operatives mean greater stability and availability of housing options for low-income Nova Scotians.

This measure indicates the percentage of co-operative housing organizations that move from a default position "project in difficulty" to a healthy, functioning cooperative - in terms of financial, democratic and physical condition.

Where are we now?

With Economic Stimulus funding, the department invested $18.8 million to retro-fit over 1,100 homes in 31 co-operative organizations. These improvements in physical condition contributed to the overall health of the co-operatives; however 28 percent are still considered to be "in difficulty", short of the target of 19 percent.

Where do we want to be in the future?

By July 1, 2012, the department plans to move six co-operatives out of the default position. This will reduce the percentage of co-operatives "in difficulty" to 17 percent, representing significant progress towards achieving our target of 10 percent by 2013-2014. The department will continue to work closely with housing co-operatives to improve their long term sustainability.

3. Measure: Households Assisted with Health and Safety Repairs

The department's housing repair programs enable lower income households to make emergency, health, and safety-related repairs to their homes.

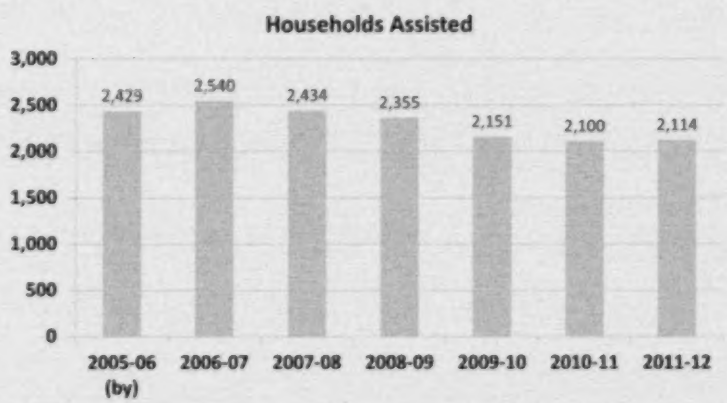
What does the measure tell us?

Preserving, in good condition, existing affordable housing occupied by low-income households and modifying and adapting homes so that low-income seniors and persons with disabilities can live independently is essential for their well-being, the well-being of their families, and for the development of sustainable communities.

This measure indicates the number of households the department assists each year with health and safety related home repairs. Financial assistance is provided in the form of grants, loans, and forgivable loans.

Where are we now?

In 2010-2011 the maximum amount of assistance available under the provincial housing repair programs was increased from $5,000 to $6,500, providing deeper coverage but fewer grants. In consideration of this, the department's target for 2011-2012 was to assist 2,000 household with health and safety related repairs. The department was able to exceed this target by just over 100 households with a total investment of over $15 million.



Where do we want to be in the future?

Our target for 2012-2013 is to preserve/adapt 2,000 affordable homes through emergency repairs, health and safety related repairs and home adaptations that enable seniors and persons with disabilities to live independently.

Measure: Public Housing Vacancy Rate

What does the measure tell us?

Public housing vacancy rate is a measure of the department's capacity to accommodate the demand for public housing.

Where are we now?

The average provincial vacancy rate was 3.3 percent, only slightly higher than the target of 3 percent. Among housing authorities, average vacancy rates ranged for a low of 2.1 percent for Metropolitan Regional Housing Authority to a high of 4.7 percent for Cape Breton Island Housing Authority.

Where do we want to be in the future?

Consistent with industry standards, the public housing vacancy rate target for each housing authority is a maximum of 3 percent. To achieve this target, the department will continue to identify and implement changes to internal processes, systems and standards to ensure that vacant units are available to rent in a timely manner.

5.3 Children, youth and families have a safe, secure and stable environment in which to grow and prosper

The following four performance measures are used to track progress towards securing a safe, secure and stable environment for children, youth and families to grow and prosper.

1. Measure: Number of Children in Care Placed for Adoption

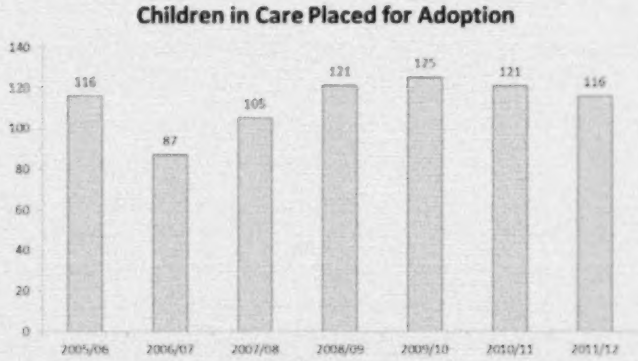
The department is responsible for Nova Scotian children when they cannot be safely and securely cared for by their own families. Where a child is in the department's permanent care and custody and legally free for adoption, it is in the child's best interest to be placed for adoption as quickly as possible. Research has shown that a secure stable family environment is an important factor in healthy child development.

What does this measure tell us?

This measure reports on the number of children in the department's care that are placed for agency adoption. The number includes adoptions that have not yet been finalized.

Where are we now?

In 2011-2012, 116 children were placed for adoption. This exceeds the department's target of 100 adoptions but is down slightly compared to the previous three years.



Where do we want to be in the future?

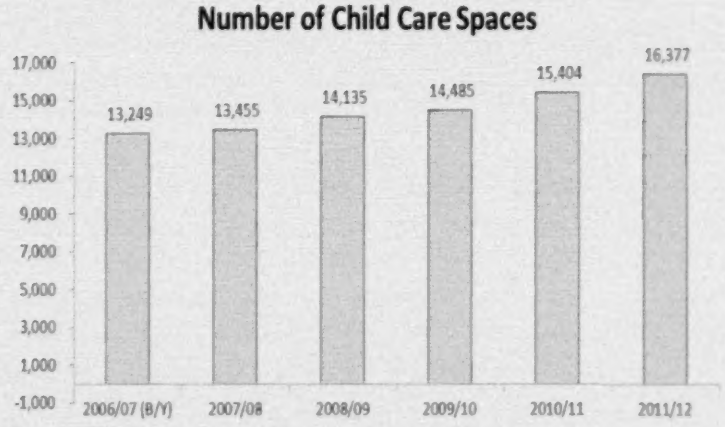
It is the department's goal to place all children who come into permanent care for adoption. In 2012-2013, the department will be working with our partners to develop and implement a strategy to increase adoption rates in Nova Scotia. To support this, the department will also implement a Learning and Growth Strategy for child welfare staff to ensure they have access to the most current best practice approaches.

2. Measure: Number of Child Care Spaces

Quality child care offers an ongoing opportunity for children's learning while providing safe and reliable care that promotes socialization, health, and a child's well-being. The availability of child care is also an important resource for parents to enter and remain in the labour force, or to access employment training.

What does this measure tell us?

The number of licensed child care spaces is a measure of the department's ongoing commitment to the early childhood sector's provision of programs that support the development needs of young children.



Where are we now?

In 2011-2012, the department provided operational funding for an additional 973 licensed child care spaces, bringing the total number of spaces up to 16,377. This exceeds the 2011-2012 target of 15,418 licensed child care spaces.

Where do we want to be in the future?

The department will continue to provide funding to licensed child care facilities and family home day care agencies. In 2012-2013, the department aims to increase in the number of full and part time spaces in licensed child care facilities by 5 percent, over 800 spaces.

3. Measure: Child Care Subsidies

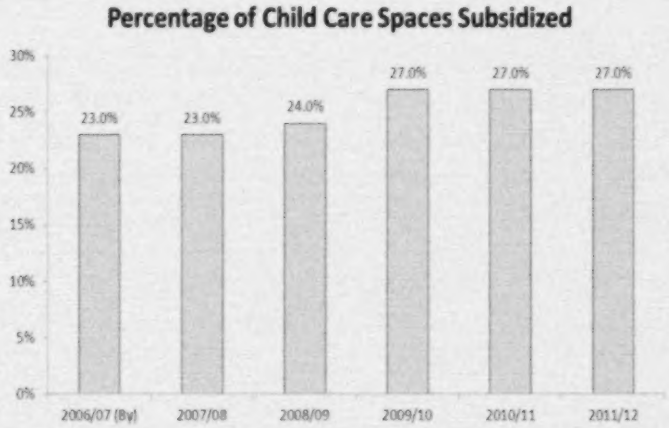
Availability of affordable child care is a critical resource to low and moderate income families.

What does this measure tell us?

The percentage of subsidized spaces is a measure of the department's ability to support eligible families with their child care costs.

Where are we now?

In 2011-2012, child care became more accessible and affordable through the creation of 250 new child care subsidies, bringing the total available to 4,427.



The 2011-2012, more than $17 million was provided to families to access the Child Care Subsidy Program. The target number of subsidies was met, 4,427. As of March 2012, there were no families on the waitlist for the child care subsidy program.

Where do we want to be in the future?

In 2012-2013, Community Services will continue to ensure that Nova Scotia families have access to quality, regulated child care through the provision of subsidies for eligible families.

4. Measure: Participation in the Direct Family Support for Children

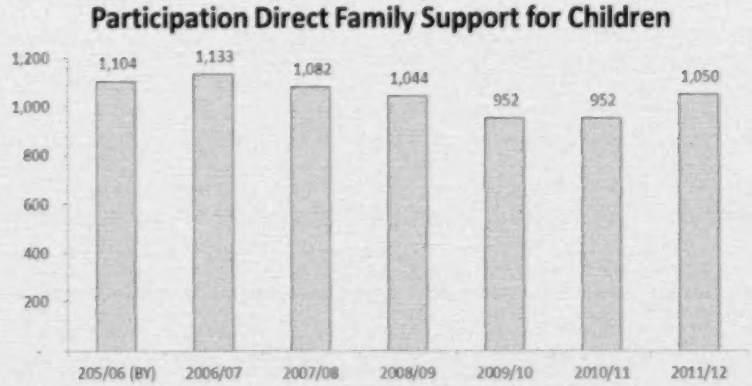
The funding offered through the Direct Family Support program enables families to support children with a disability at home, preventing the need for an out-of-home placement.

What does this measure tell us?

The number of children participating in the direct family support program demonstrates progress towards improving the continuum of residential support options available to children with disabilities.

Where are we now?

In 2011-2012, new income guidelines for the Direct Family Support- Children's program were implemented. More families in need were able to access the program. As planned, the number of children participating in the Direct Family Support increased by almost 100 to 1,050 participants.



Where do we want to be in the future?

In 2012-2013, the department will continue to implement the revised income eligibility guidelines, so more families can qualify.

5.4 Persons with disabilities have access to the most appropriate supports to enhance their quality of life

1. Measure: Number of Clients Served by Adult Service Centres

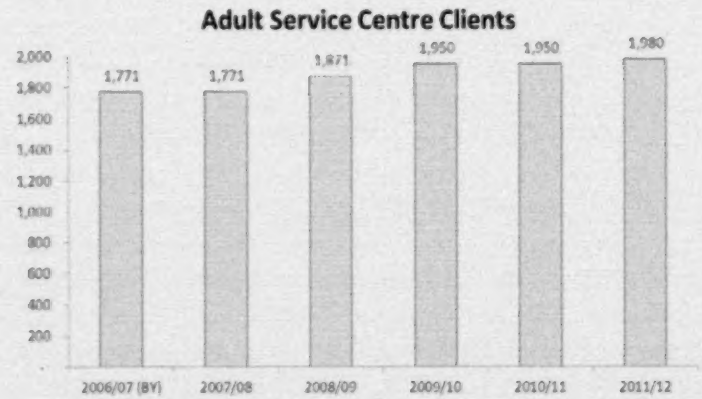
Adult Service Centres provide employment, skills training and day program opportunities for adults with disabilities in communities across Nova Scotia.

What does this measure tell us?

The number of clients served by adult service centres is a measure of the department's ability to provide access to programs that enhance the quality of life and employability of adults with disabilities.

Where are we now?

In 2011-2012, 1,980 persons with disabilities accessed services and support through 30 adult service centres across the province, falling only slightly short of the target of 2,000 participants. Recognizing that Adult Service Centre programs provide an important service to individuals with special needs, the department expanded access to day programs to disabled individuals exiting the public school system.



Where do we want to be in the future?

In 2012-2013, the department will work with the Adult Service Centre sector to expand capacity in order to provide service to individuals who are currently in residential settings or living with their family, with no day programs.

2. Measure: Number of SPD Licensed Facilities with Escalated Non-Compliance

What does this measure tell us?

Escalated non-compliance occurs when a facility has an outstanding violation that has not been corrected within a specified time. The number of SPD Licensed Facilities with escalated non-compliance is a measure of the safety of SPD licensed facilities and their ability to meet the requirements established in the *Homes for Special Care Act* and *Regulations*.

Where are we now?

In 2011-2012, twenty-three SPD licensed facilities had a substantiated violation escalated. This represents a 37.8 percent decrease in the number of SPD licensed facilities with escalated non-compliance from the previous year. The department was able to achieve a higher compliance

rate by increasing the presence of Licensing Services staff at SPD facilities and by continuing to provide technical assistance to operators of the SPD facilities.

Where do we want to be in the future?

In 2011-2012, the department licensed approximately 180 SPD small option homes. In 2012-2013, the department will be providing consultation and support to these operators to ensure they are compliant with standards under the *Homes for Special Care Act* and *Regulations*. The department will also be implementing an IT system to better track and monitor compliance.

3. Measure: Licensing Turnaround Time

In 2010, Government implemented a 10 day service standard – 80 percent of all government licenses, permits, and approvals processed in 10 business days or less.

What does this measure tell us?

This measure indicates the percentage of the department's licenses that meet the 10 day service standard. It is a measure of the performance and efficiency of the Licensing Services unit.

Where are we now?

In 2011-2012, the department met its target with 95 percent of all applications received being processed within 10 days. To ensure this target was met, guidance and support was provided to operators when completing the licensing applications, which helped ensure timely completion and processing of the applications.

Where do we want to be in the future?

In 2012-2013, the department is implementing an IT system to increase efficiencies in the processing of applications. The target is to maintain a 95 percent or higher efficiency rate in meeting the ten day turnaround standard.

Changes to Performance Measures

1. In 2012-2013 Statement of Mandate for 2012-2013, the measure - founded cases of abuse in SPD residential facilities as a percentage of the total number of referral cases was removed. Further analysis of the goals and outcomes of Protection for Persons in Care is required to establish a more accurate and relevant measure.

6.0 Financial Results

Department of Community Services Estimated & Actual Expenditures For the Year Ending March 31, 2011 Operational Area	Estimate 2011-2012 ($thousands)	Actual 2011-2012 ($thousands)	Variance	Notes
Gross Departmental Expenses:				
Senior Management	1,556	1,425	131	
Corporate Services Unit	10,891	8,912	1,979	1
Policy and Information Management	8,292	7,496	796	2
Field Offices	13,915	13,145	770	3
Services for Persons with Disabilities	254,786	265,716	(10,929)	4
Family and Children's Services	192,444	185,751	6,693	5
Housing Services	123,697	111,868	11,829	6
Employment Support & Income Assistance	370,776	372,480	(1,704)	7
Housing Authority and Property Operations	8,727	8,779	(52)	
Total Departmental Expenses	985,084	975,572	9,512	
Fees and Other Charges	(429)	(485)	(56)	
Ordinary Recoveries	(128,978)	(114,102)	14,876	8
TCA Purchase Requirements	1,200	377	823	9
Provincial Funded Staff (FTE's)	1,678	1,612	66	

Notes to the Estimated & Actual Expenditures for the Year Ending March 31, 2012

1. Savings were achieved in the areas of staff vacancies and external consulting.

2. Under spent due to savings in salaries as a result of staff vacancies.

3. Savings resulted from delays in building alterations and purchase of office furniture.

4. Over spent due to increasing number of complex and difficult to serve cases. As a result, average cost per case has increased.

5. Under spent due primarily to delays in the implementation of components of the federally funded Early Learning and Child Care plan and decline in caseloads for Children in Care. Federal funds deferred are available to offset expenditures in future year(s).

6. Lower than budget due primarily to a change in Accounting Treatment in which Capital Grants were moved to NSHDC instead of expensed in DCS.

7. Over spent due to rising Income Assistance caseloads and lower than budgeted savings realized in the Pharmacare program as a result of the implementation of the Fair Drug Pricing Act.

8. The variance was due to lower than Budgeted draw on the deferred Federal funding for Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) expansion grants. In Housing, the change in accounting treatment for capital grants resulted in lower than budgeted draw from federal funding for the Year 3 Housing Stimulus grants.

9. Under spent due to delays in the Day Care / Residential Bed Licensing computer project. The project's completion date has been re-scheduled for 2012-13.